

Rule of Law Center at the University of Richmond as a program that will be actively considered by the U.S. Agency for International Development. This is an important step forward in our effort to enhance fair and judicial systems internationally.

Today, one of the most pressing needs in emerging democracies is to educate leaders who administer justice in the traditions of due process, transparency, accountability, consistency, and judicial independence. Only with an understanding of such values can leaders within a society go forward to create stable and sustainable justice systems that are critical to democracy.

With the aim of international stability in mind, it is in our national interest to foster a crosscultural exchange and understanding of the importance of law. The International Rule of Law Center at the University of Richmond will play a constructive role in accomplishing this goal by supporting the education of future judges in emerging democracies.

The International Rule of Law Center will educate approximately 20 foreign students in a 1-year program that culminates with the students earning a master of laws degree. The program will include many practical field experiences and trips, in addition to a curriculum that focuses on judicial administration, constitutional law, the theory of a sound and fair system of justice, and elements of international law.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud Chairman BILL YOUNG and Chairman JIM KOLBE for their efforts, and I look forward to working with them in the future.

URGING GOVERNMENT OF
BELARUS TO ENSURE DEMO-
CRATIC, TRANSPARENT, AND
FAIR ELECTION PROCESS

SPEECH OF

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in support of H. Res. 652, which calls on the government of Belarus to ensure that Parliamentary elections which will take place in Belarus in October of this year are democratic, transparent and fair.

Thirteen years after the fall of communism, Belarus remains one of the few nations in Europe where the transition to democracy has not taken sufficient root.

The current political leadership continues to rule in an authoritarian manner and its government continues to crack down on those individuals and organizations who are trying to help build support for democracy and democratic institutions.

Unlike the situation in Ukraine, the government in Belarus has thus far not given any clear indication that it is committed to free and fair elections. However, in a recent meeting with the Ambassador from Belarus, this Member was led to believe that the government's position on the elections could be positive. The Ambassador gave assurances that the government would enforce the election codes and would allow all political parties to have representatives on the electoral commissions which oversee the implementation of the elec-

tions. He also indicated that Belarus would cooperate with the OSCE and would allow international observers.

At a hearing the Europe Subcommittee held in March on Belarus, this Member mentioned that Speaker DENNIS HASTERT and this Member met with the leaders of the Belarus opposition, collectively known as the Coalition Five-Plus, to discuss the elections and their vision for a democratic future for Belarus. This group of political parties has united in a common platform in an attempt to bring democracy and respectability back to the Belarus Parliament. Unfortunately, members of the opposition political parties and participants in political demonstrations continue to be subjected to increased harassment, surveillance by government agents, arrests, and physical abuse.

For these reasons, it is important that the United States Government, including this Congress, continue to emphatically express our strong support for free, fair and transparent elections and more definitive progress toward establishing a functioning democracy in Belarus.

In Europe, the situation in Belarus understandably seems to be of equal concern. The OSCE, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe have all expressed deep concerns over Belarus and its forthcoming elections. In fact, this Member is informed that the Chair of the Belarus Working Group of the OSCE PA recently visited Minsk for additional discussions on the elections.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 652 emphasizes that if Belarus is ever to become more integrated into the community of democratic nations, it must work toward the establishment of a genuinely democratic political system in which the freedom of association and assembly are guaranteed. It also must be a fact that political candidates from the opposition will be free from political harassment and intimidation as they campaign for office and in which the media is free to act independently, free from government control or intimidation. Finally there must be a system in which elections and the electoral process are open, transparent and fair if Belarus wishes to be included in the community of democratic nations.

The parliamentary elections this fall will be a litmus test for President Lukashenko's commitment to democracy and the direction he intends to take Belarus in the future.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 652 rather precisely explains the concerns and recommendations of the United States House of Representatives.

I urge the adoption of the resolution.

REMEMBERING H.J. "BUBBA"
SHANDS, JR.

HON. JIM TURNER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. TURNER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on June 19, 2004, the City of Lufkin and the state of Texas lost a friend with the passing of "Bubba" Shands, Jr. Bubba was an invaluable member of the community in Lufkin for many years, and he will be sorely missed.

The Lufkin Daily News recently called Bubba a "a Lufkin icon" and "East Texas' fa-

vorite son." I think those are two fitting names for Bubba, but I also think there are many more that we could add to that list: husband, father, grandfather, brother, athlete, patriot, leader, believer, and always, great friend to all.

Hilliard Judge "Bubba" Shands was born on November 18, 1926 in Lufkin, Texas. He grew up as a highly accomplished student-athlete, first at Lufkin High School and then at the University of Texas.

Bubba began working in the banking industry in 1958, and continued working in that industry until 1991. He was a bank executive for First Bank & Trust (formerly Republic Bank) for many years, and he also served on the boards of several other financial institutions, such as First Bank of Conroe, Angelina Savings Bank, and Balcones Resources in Austin.

Bubba always realized the importance of community service and was involved with many volunteer and civic organizations throughout his life. He worked diligently towards the creation of Angelina County Airport and the Salvation Army's Adult Day Center in Lufkin, and he was also deeply active in the movement to fund and create Angelina College. He served on the board of the United Way of Angelina County, the Angelina College Board of Trustees, the Lufkin Rotary Club, and he was an active member of the First United Methodist Church in Lufkin.

We pray for God's comforting spirit to be with his wife, Ann; his sister, Mary; his daughter Becky; his son, Jay; and his five grandchildren, Matt, Hill, Rob, Richie, Annie and Hunter.

Today, we honor the memory of a great East Texan, Hilliard Judge "Bubba" Shands, and we ask that we may all celebrate and enjoy life the same way Bubba did for each of his 77 years on this Earth.

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF
COPPER CREEK RECORDS

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2004

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize the 25th Anniversary of Copper Creek Records. Copper Creek Records was formed in October of 1978 when recordings were made to introduce an up-and-coming bluegrass band known as the Johnson Mountain Boys, a group that went on to become festival and concert headliners as well as pioneers in the resurgence of traditional forms of bluegrass music.

Early in the label's career, documenting the history of bluegrass and old-time music was of paramount importance. The company documented such events as live concerts, field recordings, and vintage radio shows by legendary artists such as the Stanley Brothers and the Carter Family, as well as Reno & Smiley. A number of these releases were cited by the Library of Congress for their packaging, content, and historical value.

Coupled with historic preservation, Copper Creek has been active in developing new, up-and-coming talent as well as providing an outlet to musically deserving artists who fly just under the "mainstream radar." Most recently, the label has been active in licensing vintage